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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY USSR (Latvian SSR)

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SUBJECT Harbor Information and Customs Clearing
in Lepaya

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Harbor Installations.

1. The commercial harbor of Lepaya (56° 32'N/21° 00'E), Latvian S.S.R., is divided into three parts: the Free Harbor, the Winter or New Harbor, and the Town Canal or Old Harbor. All wrecks which were lying in the commercial harbor have been removed and the quays have been repaired. The railroad tracks have been repaired, and the roads leading to the harbor, as well as the streets of the harbor area, have been repaved and reconditioned. *
2. A new Soviet broad-gauge track has been laid at the Winter Harbor, which is the main harbor. Four 3-ton cranes on tracks were available. Two 50-ton floating cranes arrived in Lepaya in the fall of 1949. It is now possible to unload goods weighing over three tons, thus relieving the few cranes available. There were no sheds or warehouses in this part of the harbor and for this reason all bulk cargo, such as cement, lime, bricks, cut lumber, etc., must be stored in the open. The large amount of stored cement observed gave [] impression that it hardly seemed possible to use such a quantity except for special purposes.

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Transshipment of Cargo.

3. General cargo is usually unloaded directly from ships into freight cars which were kept ready for this purpose, and which were later dispatched to the U.S.S.R. If no rolling stock was available the goods were put on the quay where they were sometimes exposed to the weather for days. Incoming rolling stock was first loaded with goods from ships rather than with goods lying on the quay. As a result, many valuable engine parts deteriorated.
4. The ships were unloaded by Latvians and Russians. Despite three shifts, unloading operations proceeded very slowly. The time required for unloading a 3,000-ton ship was 12 to 14 days. This was due to poor mechanical equipment, unskilled labor, and the poor rations of the workers. **

Clearance Procedure.

5. After a ship had been berthed, the ship's agent came aboard with three

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or four customs officers and an MVD officer accompanied by two soldiers. The ship's agent settled the clearing formalities. After the ship's crew list had been produced, the whole crew had to fall in. Each member of the crew had to step forward when called and was checked against the photograph in his seaman's identification book. All living spaces, storerooms, and holds were thoroughly inspected under the personal supervision of the MVD officer. After the customs officials and the MVD officer left the ship, two soldiers mounted the guard at the gangway, one preventing the crew members from going ashore without permission and the other sentry patrolling in front of the ship. As a rule, the members of the crew were allowed to leave the ship between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. If a crew member overstayed his shore leave, by even 10 minutes, his landing permit was withdrawn and he was not allowed to go ashore in the future. The landing permits were generally issued after eight hours, but sometimes only after 24 hours.

Navigation.

6. The harbor could be entered only through the middle entrance, the two others being blocked. *** The barrier nets for the middle entrance were kept ready. Sentries were posted and AA guns were emplaced on the ends of the two mole heads at the middle entrance to the harbor.

- 25X1A * [] Comment. The information on the restoration of all quays, etc., in the various parts of the harbor agrees with previous data.
- 25X1A ** [] Comment. Since the efficiency of unloading is low, it is possible that the harbor traffic of Lepaya is not very heavy.
- 25X1A *** [] Comment. The report is the first to state that the southern harbor entrance was also blocked. The northern entrance has never been used.

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